

No. 5

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CURSE OF THE SPAWN



CURSE OF THE SPAWN

TODD McFARLANE &
IMAGE COMICS™ PRESENTS:

"SUTURE"



DEDICATED TO:

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HOW DOES
A NIGHTMARE
BEGIN?

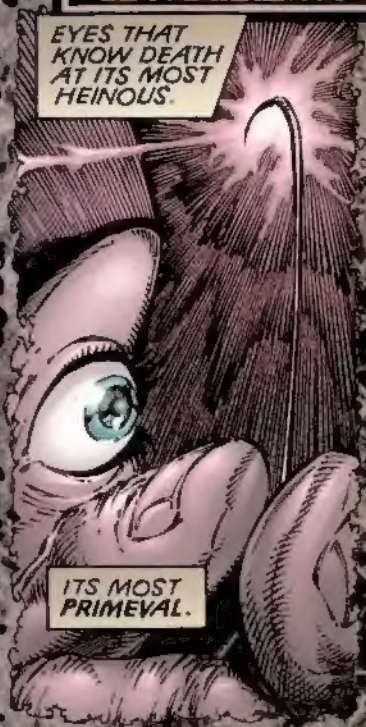


IN DARKNESS?
IN RAIN?



IN THE EYES OF A
WOMAN BRIGHT
WITH HOPE AND
FUTURE.

EYES THAT
KNOW DEATH
AT ITS MOST
HEINOUS.



ITS MOST
PRIMEVAL.

AND AS EVIL
UNRAVELS THE
FABRIC OF
OUR OH, SO
TENUOUS
EXISTENCE--

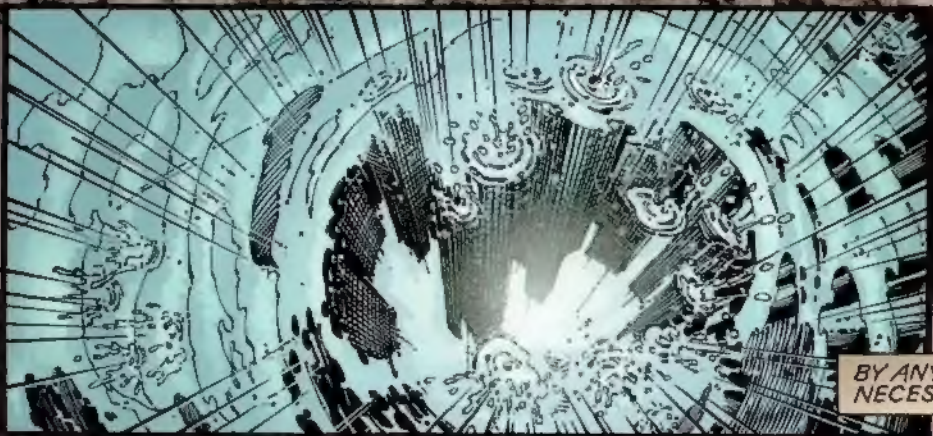


--THERE ARE THOSE
WHO STRUGGLE TO
KEEP THE THREADS
TAUT.



THE SEAMS
CLOSED.

THE
SUTURES
TIGHT.



BY ANY MEANS
NECESSARY.

NEW YORK CITY.

AWASH IN
SHADOWS
AND DREAD.

EYES STRAIGHT
AHEAD. DON'T
LOOK LEFT OR
RIGHT. BECAUSE
THERE, ON THE
DARK PERIPHERY,
LIE THOSE THINGS
WE WISH NOT TO
SEE. SO, MOVE
QUICKLY THROUGH
THE STORM. SLOW
DOWN AND THE
EVER-THREATEN-
ING DARKNESS
CLOSES IN.

SUCKING THE DOUR UNFORTUNATES
INTO ALLEYWAYS AND RECESSES FROM
WHICH THEY WILL NEVER ESCAPE.

BUT THE MIND HAS ITS
OWN JAGGED TRAPS.
ITS OWN BLEAK TRASH-
CLOGGED BACK STREETS.

JOHN MAWBLEY
KNOWS THOSE
STREETS ALL
TOO WELL.

BREAKFAST
CONTINENTAL STYLE
2.79
COFFEE FREE

BETWEEN BITTER
SIPS OF TEPID JAVA
AND GUMMY BITES
OF AGED WHEAT
TOAST GONE SPONGY
WITH MELTED
ANIMAL FAT, HE
CHRONICLES, IN
INDECIPHERABLE
SCRIPT, HIS DAILY
TRIALS AND
TRIBULATIONS.

JOHN MAWBLY VIEWS HIMSELF AS AN ALIEN STRANDED ON A HOSTILE WORLD. BUT HE UNDERSTANDS. HE KNOWS THE TRUTH. HE SEES WHERE OTHERS ARE BLIND.

THE ANGRY, HATE-FILLED WORLD EYES HIM WITH CONTEMPT. HE KNOWS. WRITES IT ALL DOWN. A TESTAMENT. A TREATISE ON THE NATURE OF THE ULTIMATE COMBATANT. THE ULTIMATE ADVERSARY.

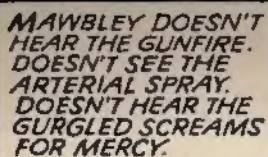
THE ENEMY ABSOLUTE.

THE BEAST KNOWN AS LEGION.

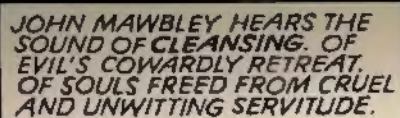
THE THING WE SO SIMPLY DEFINE AS EVIL.

THE ENEMY SEES HIM THROUGH HIS SHACKLED MINIONS. REALIZES HIS KNOWLEDGE. AND HENCE, MUST BE EXPUNGED.

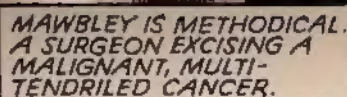
ALL REVOLUTIONS BEGIN WITH A SINGULAR VISION. A PURITY OF COMMITMENT.



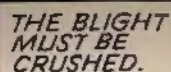
MAWBLEY DOESN'T
HEAR THE GUNFIRE.
DOESN'T SEE THE
ARTERIAL SPRAY.
DOESN'T HEAR THE
GURGLED SCREAMS
FOR MERCY.



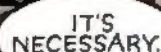
JOHN MAWBLEY HEARS THE
SOUND OF CLEANSING. OF
EVIL'S COWARDLY RETREAT.
OF SOULS FREED FROM CRUEL
AND UNWITTING SERVITUDE.



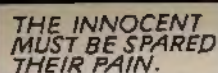
MAWBLEY IS METHODICAL.
A SURGEON EXCISING A
MALIGNANT, MULTI-
TENDRILED CANCER.



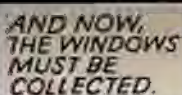
THE BLIGHT
MUST BE
CRUSHED.



IT'S
NECESSARY.



THE INNOCENT
MUST BE SPARED
THEIR PAIN.



AND NOW,
THE WINDOWS
MUST BE
COLLECTED.

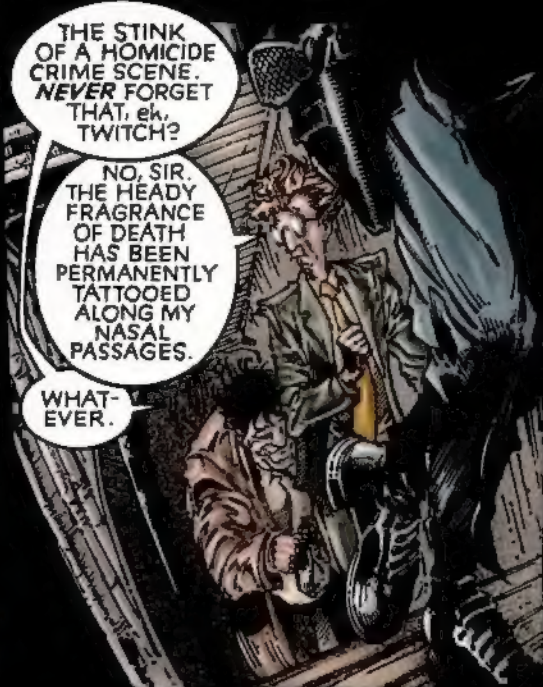
HELL'S KITCHEN.
AN ISLAND OF
LOWER MIDDLE
CLASS PEOPLE
HANGING ONTO
DIGNITY BY
THEIR SPLINTERED
FINGERNAILS.



THE STINK
OF A HOMICIDE
CRIME SCENE.
NEVER FORGET
THAT, ek,
TWITCH?

NO, SIR,
THE HEADY
FRAGRANCE
OF DEATH
HAS BEEN
PERMANENTLY
TATTOOED
ALONG MY
NASAL
PASSAGES.

WHAT-
EVER.



JUST
STAY OUTTA
THE WAY,
DICKS.

'CAUSE NOW
THAT YOU'RE **DICKS**,
YOU'RE LIKE SOME-
THING I CAN'T SCRAPE
OFF MY POOPER-
SCOOPER.

YOU'RE LIKE
THAT FLOATER THAT
WON'T FLUSH. WHAT'S
THAT SMELL? **OK,
DICKS.** SO DON'T
MAKE A MESS IN
THERE. GOT IT?!

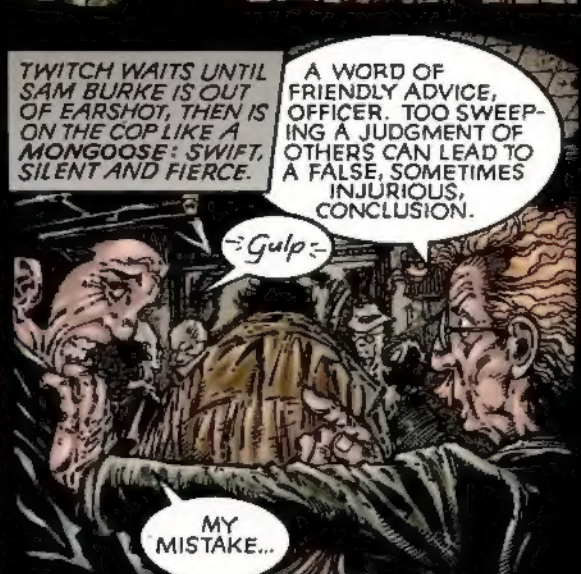


SURE,
PAL. I
HEAR
YA.

GOOD, GO ON
IN. EDLAND AND
BRAYDE ARE
WAITIN'.

TWITCH WAITS UNTIL
SAM BURKE IS OUT
OF EARSHOT, THEN IS
ON THE COP LIKE A
MONGOOSE: SWIFT,
SILENT AND FIERCE.

A WORD OF
FRIENDLY ADVICE,
OFFICER. TOO SWEEP-
ING A JUDGMENT OF
OTHERS CAN LEAD TO
A FALSE, SOMETIMES
INJURIOUS,
CONCLUSION.



=Gulp=

MY
MISTAKE...

THE STENCH OF DRIED BLOOD AND OFFAL, COMBINED WITH THE REEK OF RECENTLY HEAVED COP VOMIT, SMOGS THE CHEAP APARTMENT. HORROR PAINTS THE WALLS AND FURNITURE. HELL HAS TOUCHED THIS PLACE.

VIC'S BEEN STRUNG UP WITH MOTORCYCLE CHAIN, SLICED COMPLETELY IN HALF FROM CROTCH TO COLLAR BONE, AND WRAPPED WITH MEDICAL TAPE TO HOLD THE PIECES TOGETHER.

HEAD'S GONE, REPLACED WITH A ROSE. MURDER WEAPON'S A SURGICAL SAW, LEFT AT THE SCENE.

THE WORD "ROSE" IS WRITTEN ON THE VIC, IN THE VIC'S BLOOD. THIS IS NUMBER FOUR IN AS MANY WEEKS.

I AIN'T SLEPT SINCE NUMBER ONE.

YEAH. NICE LADY. PRETTY. WANTED TO KNOW IF HER EX WAS INTO THIS... uh, CRAP, WHAT WAS IT?

HUMILIATION SEX CULT, SIR.

YEAH. PISS AND TAKE DUMPS ON EACH OTHER. THAT SORTA THING.

THIS HERE'S HILLARY REECE, 'CCORDING TO FINGERPRINT I.D. YOU BRIGHT BOYS HAVE HER AS A P.I. CASE, OR WHAT?

ANYWAY, HE IS. WE SNEAK SOME PICS. SHE PAYS US OUR RATE AND WE'RE GONE. THAT'S A WEEK AGO TUESDAY.

WE GOT THE
PICS. REAL KODAK
MOMENTS. CAN YOU
GIVE US ANYTHING
ELSE? SOMETHING
SHE MENTIONED? NEW
GUY SHE MET? TROUBLE
AT WORK? STALKER?
PURSE-SNATCHER?
ANYTHING?

NOPE.
SORRY.

YOU KNOW, BURKE...
YOU AND YOUR RODENT-
FACED PARTNER WERE
GOOD GOLD SHIELDS ONCE.
NOW LOOK AT YOU!

YOU GUYS ARE A
COUPLA MISTAKES,
YOU KNOW THAT?
PUNK DICKS SCRAPING
UNDER WHAT THE
BOTTOM OF THE
BARREL'S SITTING
ON.

MAGGOTS
DON'T GO
WHERE
YOU ARE.

YOU DONE
WITH US?

YEAH. GET
OUT. I'M SURE
THERE'S A CRACK-
WHORE OUT
THERE NEEDS A
COUPLA PRIVATE
EYES TO FIND
HER NEXT
"JOHN".

HAHAHA

SO. CHOW
TIME. WHAT
DO YOU FEEL
LIKE?

I SEEM
TO HAVE LOST
MY APPETITE,
SIR.

YOU
LETTIN' THOSE
JOKERS GET
TO YOU?

THEY'RE JUST
PISSED 'CAUSE THEY GOT
FOUR STIFFS AND NO CLUES.
I USED TO RIP A NEW ONE IN
ANYBODY WHO LOOKED CROSS-
EYED AT ME WHEN A CASE
WAS DOING A HIGH-BOARD
NOSE-DIVE.

FORGET
ABOUT IT.

IT'S NOT
THAT, SIR...
IT'S--

YAA!

SCREEEE!

WOW.

Uk...

SORRY 'BOUT THAT, MISS. DIDN'T SEE THOSE LEGS-- I MEAN DIDN'T SEE YA UNTIL I WAS ALMOST ON TOP OF YOU...

Uk, WHAT I MEAN IS...

IT'S OKAY.

THE FACE WE'VE SEEN. EYES FULL OF HOPE. KEEP THEM STRAIGHT AHEAD. DON'T LOOK LEFT OR RIGHT.

HER NAME IS GRETCHEN CULVER.

OFFICE MANAGER FOR A BOUTIQUE PUBLISHING HOUSE. MCGREGOR ARNOLD. GRETCHEN TAKES GREAT CARE WHEN IT COMES TO HER CO-WORKERS. SHE KNOWS THEM ALL WELL. THEY ARE LIKE FAMILY.

WHICH REMINDS HER THAT SHE OWES HER MOTHER A THANK-YOU CALL FOR THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT. BUT FIRST A CALL TO HER FIANCE, WAYNE.

THEY'RE SETTING A DATE. HIS FAMILY HAS TALKED ABOUT HELPING THEM BUY AN APARTMENT IN TRIBECA. SHE GETS THE MACHINE.

HI, SWEETIE. IT'S ME, YOU THERE?...OKAY. I WAS THINKING OF DINNER AT CAFE des ARTISTES TONIGHT. THERE'S ALSO THIS PLAY IN THE VILLAGE YOU MENTIONED ON SUNDAY? MAYBE?

ANYWAY, I'LL CALL AFTER MY MEETING. IT'S WITH A NEW WRITER AT SOME DIVE COFFEE SHOP. OK, AND CALL YOUR FATHER. HE'S TERRORIZING REAL ESTATE AGENTS ALL OVER TOWN ON OUR BEHALF. I LOVE YOU.

GRETCHEN DOESN'T SEE THE "CLOSED" SIGN ON THE DOOR. HER EYES HAVE VEERED EVER SO SLIGHTLY TO THE RIGHT.

FAR ENOUGH TO SEE THE DARKNESS.

A SCENE FIT FOR DANTE.
DENUDED BODIES LINED UP IN
NEAT, TASTEFUL ROWS. FACE
DOWN. SIDE BY SIDE. FALLEN
SOLDIERS IN THE GREATEST
WAR OF ALL.

AND MAWBLEY, TAKING
STOCK, CAUTIOUS AS AN
ACCOUNTANT USES AN
OPHTHALMOLOGIST'S
EXTRACTOR TO PRY FREE
THE WINDOWS OF THE SOUL.

THE EYES OF
THE FALLEN

GRETCHEN WATCHES, STRICKEN, NUMBED
TO HER MARROW. MAWBLEY PLACES THE
BLOOD-SMEARED EYES IN STERILE
SPECIMAN VIALS AND LAYS THEM IN A
CLEAN-TRAY WITH A DOZEN OTHERS
INSIDE HIS BOOKBAG

SO HORRIBLY
PRECISE.

HELLO.

DON'T
BE AFRAID.
WHAT I'M
DOING. MY
WORK.

IT'S QUITE
NECESSARY.

THE SLOW STEADINESS OF MAWBLEY'S
VOICE CHILLS GRETCHEN. ENOUGH TO
STARTLE HER RAW INSTINCT TO
SURVIVE. GRETCHEN FLEES. BEYOND
ANY COGNITIVE SENSE. SHE RUNS FROM
A PREDATOR. SHE RUNS FOR HER LIFE.

WAIT.
PLEASE. YOU
HAVE SUCH
BEAUTIFUL
EYES.

THEY
MUST BE
FREED YOU
MUST BE
FREED.

OK
GOD--

FROM YOUR
INFECTION.

SHE ROUNDS A CORNER. EYES OVER HER
SHOULDER. DOESN'T SEE THE VEHICLES.
DOESN'T SEE THE POLICE CRUISER.

WHAM!

HER MIND IS RE-
DUCED TO STATIC
AND SPARKS AS
HER NERVOUS
SYSTEM SWAMPS
WITH PAIN.

GRETCHEN DOESN'T FEEL THE
IMPACT, OR HEAR THE WET
SCREECH OF TIRES AND SHOCKED
GASPS OF BYSTANDERS.

DARKNESS
DESCENDS LIKE
A COMFORTING
SHROUD.

SO
SAD...

MAWBLEY MOVES ON.
HE WILL RETRIEVE HIS
WARES FROM THE
COFFEE SHOP. HE WILL
RELIVE THIS DAY IN HIS
DREAMS AND NOTE IN
HIS JOURNAL THE
TRAGIC LOSS OF A PAIR
OF GLISTENING
WINDOWS.

IT TAKES TWENTY MINUTES FOR AN AMBULANCE TO WEAVE ITS WAY THROUGH THE TRAFFIC SNARL. THE STEADY DELUGE ONLY MAKES IT WORSE.

RIGHT THERE. HOLD IT!

JEEZ, YOU WANNA CRUSH HER, OR WHAT?

NICE JOB, OFFICERS. BACK OVER HER A COUPLA TIMES AND FINISH THE JOB, WHY DON'T'CHA.

HEY, SHE CAME TEAR-ASSING OUTTA NOWHERE. WHAT THE HELL WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO? HUH?

A BLOCK AWAY, MORE BYSTANDERS AND POLICE GATHER AT A GHASTLY HORRORSHOW. BLUE AND WHITES ARRIVE FROM BOTH DIRECTIONS. NEWS CAMS ARE NOT FAR BEHIND.



INSIDE, RAY SPARKS. YOUNG, INEXPERIENCED. FORTY-TWO DAYS WITH A GOLD SHIELD TRANSFERRED FROM VICE INTO HOMICIDE TO COVER A MAN-POWER SHORTAGE. NOW HE'S ANSWERED THE PHONE AS PRIMARY ON A MULTIPLE HOMICIDE. RAY SPARKS IS IN WAY OVER HIS HEAD.

KEEP THOSE MEDIA SHARKS OUTTA CAMERA RANGE, 'KAY. DON'T NEED THIS SPLATTERFEST ON THE FIVE O'CLOCK. FOLKS SPITTIN' UP THEIR MICROWAVEABLES ALL OVER THEIR LINOLEUM.

OKAY.

WHAT ABOUT THAT CRACK-UP DOWN THE STREET? ANY RELATION?

NAH. SOME OFFICE-BIMBO GOT SIDESWIPE. TOTALLY UNRELATED.

OK.

SPARKS' MIND WORKS. DESPITE HIS INEXPERIENCE, RAY IS NO DUMMY. HIS GRANDFATHER HAD A MIND LIKE A STEEL TRAP. SPARKS TAKES AFTER HIM. RIGHT NOW HE KNOWS SOMETHING FEELS WRONG. OVERLOOKED. BUT, FOR NOW, HE DOESN'T PUSH IT.

HEY, ANYBODY SEEN THE M.E.? THESE FOLKS AREN'T GETTING ANY FRESHER.

A DANK DELI HAUNTED BY CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT VIOLATIONS. FAMOUS FOR THEIR BELLY-BUSTING, COLON-CRUNCHING, ALL-THE-MEAT-YOU-CAN-EAT SUB SANDWICHES.

TENTH ONE'S THE CHARM.

LUCKY ELEVEN.

SPLAT

SURE YOU DON'T WANT SOME OF THIS CHOW, TWITCH? BEST SALAMI-SURPRISE IN THE FRIGGING CITY.

WHAT ARE WE DOING, SIR?

FUELING THE FURNACE. STOKING THE COALS.

NO, I MEAN HERE IN OUR LIVES. WORKING OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM AS PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS.

THOSE REMARKS MADE BY DETECTIVE EDLAND WERE POIGNANT TO SAY THE LEAST. WHAT ARE WE ACCOMPLISHING BY PURSUING CASES OF MARITAL DISPUTE?

WE'RE BARELY MAKING OUR OFFICE RENT FROM MONTH TO MONTH. OUR PHONE IS TURNED ON AND OFF WITH THE REGULARITY OF A LIGHT SWITCH. I SHARE MY DESK WITH A COMMUTER HIGHWAY OF COCKROACHES.

THIS JUST ISN'T WHAT I EXPECTED FOR US, SIR.

LOOK, I KNOW IT'S HARD. HELL, YOU THINK I LIKE TRACKING DOWN JOE PERVO IN HIS RUBBER UNDERPANTS? HELL NO. BUT I DON'T TRUST ONE POLICE PLAZA AND I WON'T EVER AGAIN. THAT'S A FACT.

ALL I KNOW IS, IF ONE CASE, **JUST ONE**, MATTERS A SINGLE GOOD GODDAMN, THAT TO ME MAKES ALL THE TOILET DREDGING SCUT-WORK WORTHWHILE.

TWITCH KNOWS THAT BENEATH A HUNDRED CRUSHING TENTACLES OF LIFE-CHOKING CHOLESTEROL, SAM BURKE'S HEART BEATS HARD FOR THE INNOCENT.

YOU'RE CORRECT AS USUAL, SIR. BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, ALTRUISM IS NOT PUTTING FOOD ON MY FAMILY'S TABLE.

WELL STOP YOUR BELLY-ACHING, TWITCH. DINNER'S ON ME THIS WEEK.

TWO HUNDRED SMACKERS COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK STATE LOTTERY COMMISSION. LUCKY THIRTEEN. THAT'S HOW IT GOES, PARTNER. THE NEXT CASE COULD BE OUR BIG TICKET.

OUTSIDE, A FAMILIAR AMBULANCE PASSES. TWITCH DOESN'T KNOW WHY THE SIGHT OF IT BRINGS A SUDDEN CHILL. UNCONSCIOUSLY, HE CHECKS HIS SHOULDER-HOLSTERED .44 LONG BORE.

THE AMBULANCE CARRYING GRETCHEN CULVER SLEWS THROUGH SLOW TRAFFIC ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE. TWO PATROL CARS ARE CLOSE BEHIND.

SERGEANT DOUG HALLIDAY, MOBILE SQUAD SUPERVISOR, A TWENTY YEAR STREET VET, AND HIS ROOKIE PARTNER KENNY OSBORNE, RIDE ESCORT IN THE AMBULANCE.

MAMA'S GOT A NICE LITTLE SQUEEZE BOX THERE, DON'TCHA THINK, KENNY?

SIR?

SURE YA DO. WOULDN'T BE NO MAN IF THIS SWEET PIECE DIDN'T PUT A LITTLE LEAD IN "MR. HAPPY'S" PENCIL. SURE GETS YOUR PONY UP ON ITS HINDQUARTERS. DON'T SHE?

GO ON.

TAKE A LOOK.

HALLIDAY WINKS AT THE PARAMEDICS. OSBORNE IS CONFUSED THINKS IT'S A JOKE AT FIRST. THEN REALIZES SOMETHING IS GOING ON HERE. SOMETHING THAT'S BEEN GOING ON FOR A LONG TIME.

GAVE HER SOME PAIN-KILLERS PUT HER OUT BUT GOOD, SARGE.

Tee hee, tee hee

SHE MIGHT GO SEMI-CONSCIOUS AT MOST.

Tee hee, tee hee

JUST ENOUGH TO ENJOY THE RIDE.

THE AMBULANCE AND
TAILING BLUE AND WHITES
KILL THEIR RESPECTIVE
SIRENS AND VEER INTO AN
ALLEYWAY THEY'VE
USED BEFORE.

OFFICERS DEKE AND MICHELLI.
BOTH LONG TIME PARTICIPANTS
IN THIS LITTLE "GAME".

WHAT A LUCKY BREAK,
huh? RIGHT IN FRONT OF
OUR UNIT. BAM. HELLOO,
MAMA.

HOPE WE DON'T GOTTA
WAIT TOO DAMN LONG
FOR OUR TURN. YOU SEE THE
PERKY HEADLIGHTS ON THAT
SLICE. BADDABING,
BADDABOOM!

SERGEANT, uh, SIR...
YOU'RE NOT PROPOSING
THAT WE, uh, **RAPE** THIS
WOMAN?!

HEY, YOU TAKE YOUR
OPPORTUNITIES WHERE YOU
CAN GET 'EM. YOU'LL NEVER
SEE UPTOWN CREAM LIKE THIS
IN YOUR COFFEE, OSBORNE,
SO DRINK UP WHILE IT'S
HOT. ANYWAY, SHE'LL
NEVER KNOW.

WE'LL KNOW!
AND I DON'T
WANT ANY PART
OF THIS! **IT'S
SICK!**

COP RULE
NUMERO UNO:
YOU CAN ONLY
TRUST YOUR
PARTNERS, KENNY.
SCREW US OVER
AND YOU'LL
NEVER BE SAFE.
NEVER.

NOW DROP
TROU' AND GET
IN THERE BE-
FORE I GET
PISSED OFF!

HEY,
MOVE ALONG,
SEWER-SLUGS,
POLICE
BUSINESS.

NOTHING
TO SEE HERE,
SKIDMARKS. SO
BEAT IT.

OK, YOU'RE
PART OF IT, BOY.
YOU'RE GOIN' FIRST!
AND IF YOU DON'T, THE
DAY'S GONNA COME
WHEN BACK-UP'S A LITTLE
SLOW TO COVER YOUR
SQUEAKY-CLEAN ASS.
OR YOU'RE CAUGHT IN A
CROSSFIRE SITUATION
AND GET FRAGGED
"BY MISTAKE BY ONE
OF YOUR BROTHERS
IN BLUE."



CHECK
OUT THE
NEW MEAT.
LOOKS A
LITTLE GREEN
AROUND THE
GILLS.



HEY,
KENNY,
POPPED
YOUR CHERRY,
huh? A VIRGIN
NO MORE, eh,
BUDDY?



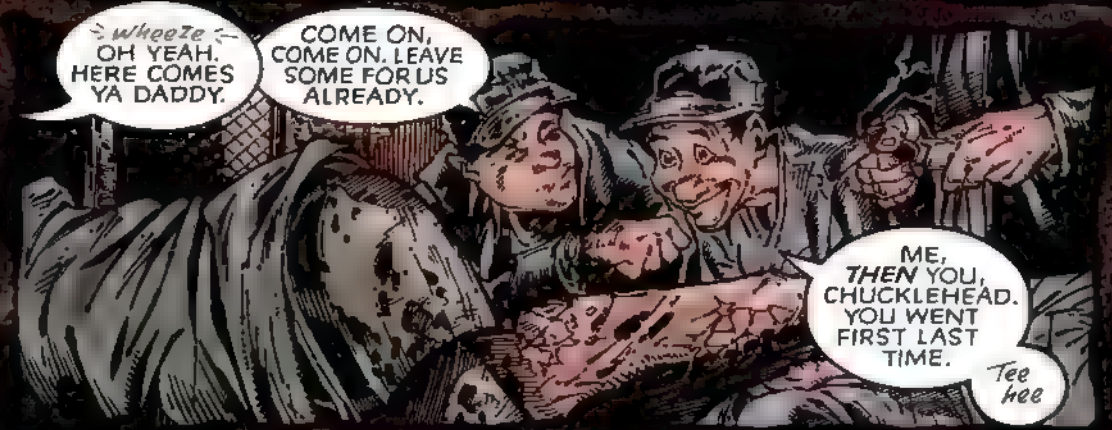
Wooff

Oh
YEAH!
THAT'S A
TEN!



OFFICER KENNY OSBORNE FEELS
A DEEP, DARK CREVICE FORMING
IN HIS SOUL. MORALITY, ETHICS,
UPBRINGING... ALL SHATTERED
IN A FEW SHORT MINUTES. HE
HATES HIMSELF. FOREVER
WITHERED. FOREVER DIMINISHED.
HE'LL NOT MEET THE REFLECTION
OF HIS OWN EYES EVER AGAIN

LET A MAN
SHOW YOU
HOW IT'S DONE,
ROOK.



Wheeze
OH YEAH.
HERE COMES
YA DADDY.

COME ON,
COME ON. LEAVE
SOME FOR US
ALREADY.

ME,
THEN YOU,
CHUCKLEHEAD.
YOU WENT
FIRST LAST
TIME.

Tee
hee

THERE IS NO EVIL SO DARK, SO CRUEL, SO WHOLLY GODLESS AS THAT WHICH WE PERPETRATE ON EACH OTHER.

OPPORTUNITY--
THE MOTHER
OF ALL EVIL.

AND HERE, A LIFE, A SOUL, A PERSON FULL OF HOPE, AND FUTURE, FEELS HERSELF RENT ASUNDER IN PLACES FAR BEYOND THE PHYSICAL.

AND THOUGH WRAPPED DEEP IN PAIN, DRUGS AND DARKNESS, SOMETHING INSIDE HER FEELS COLD AND THREATENED-- AND IT REBELS. SCRABBLES TO BREATHE.

GRETCHEN
CULVER
FIGHTS
BACK.

NO!!!

GRETCHEN THRASHES, CLAWS, KICKS, FERAL AND ADRENALIZED FROM SOME PRIMAL PLACE. BATTLES TO PROTECT WHAT IS UNIQUE AND PRECIOUS. HER LIFE. HER SEX.

GET AWAYY!

DAMMIT! SOMEBODY GRAB THIS BITCH! GET HER LEGS. HOLD HER DOWN 'TIL I FINISH!

GRETCHEN'S HAND FALLS ON HALLIDAY'S SIG/SAUER P226 WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT IT IS. PULLS THE TRIGGER BY SHEER CHANCE.

THE FULL METAL JACKETED SLUG EASILY SHREDS TWO OF MICHELLI'S FINGERS.

HEELLPP...
HEELLPP
MEEE!

SHUDDUP
GODDAMN
YOU!

GET
DOWN,
MAN!

KAKOM!

SHUDDUP!
SHUDDUP!
SHUDDUP!

SILENCE SAVE FOR HALLIDAY'S HEAVY BREATHING AND MICHELLI'S MEWLING

Aw
MAN,

SHE'S DEAD? HE KILLED HER. HE KILLED HER. WHAT'VE WE DONE, MAN? AW, GOD. WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO?!

SHUT
THE HELL
UP.

WE'RE
OKAY.
HEAR
ME?
WE'RE
FINE.

WE JUST
GOTTA GET
RID OF THE
BODY.

NO
SWEAT.

WHAP
WHACK
GRACK
CRUNCH

ALONG THE FETID,
SEWAGE-STREWN
BANKS OF THE EAST
RIVER, A FORGOTTEN
WHARF LINGERS
AMID AGED, RUSTY
WAR MACHINES.

WHAT'RE
WE DOING
HERE,
SARGE?

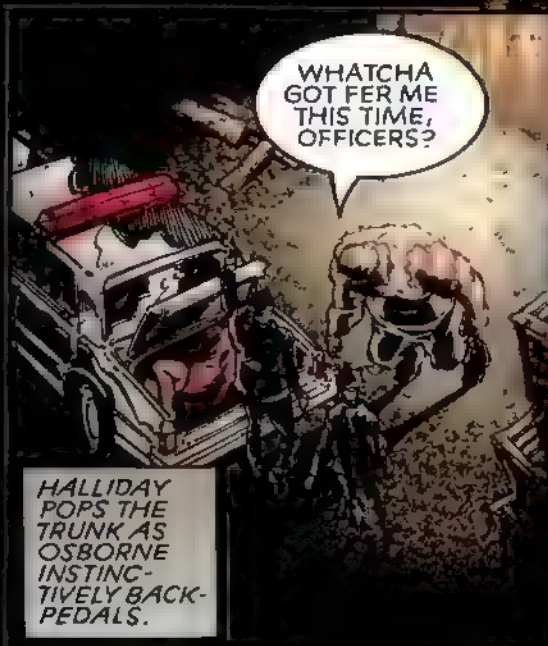
KEEP
QUIET.

SOMETHING EMERGES
FROM INSIDE THE
BUILDING. A HUGE,
HULKING MASS THAT
AT FIRST GLANCE
APPEARS TO BE A
SHAVED SILVER-BACK
GORILLA. MASSIVE
OF BONE AND BULK.

JEREMIAH "SHARPIE"
EUDEN WAS ONCE A
HEAVYWEIGHT BOXER.
HE'S NOW SLIGHTLY
RETARDED FROM THE
THOUSANDS OF BLOWS
HE'S SUFFERED, FROM
HIS FATHER TO HIS
LAST CHALLENGER
IN THE RING--

--THE ONE HE KILLED WITH A
SINGLE UPPERCUT AND THEN
POUNDED TO A TEXTURED
PUDDLE OF GREY MATTER AND
BLACK-RED BLOOD.

FOUR YEARS IN
RIKER'S ONLY GAVE
EDGE TO SHARPIE'S
NATURAL SKILLS.
AND FOCUSED HIS
DIM, AMORAL
MIND ON WHAT
HAS BECOME HIS
LIFE'S WORK.



WHATCHA
GOT FER ME
THIS TIME,
OFFICERS?

HALLIDAY
POPS THE
TRUNK AS
OSBORNE
INSTINCTIVELY
BACK-
PEDALS.



SHARPIE STARES FOR
A LONG TIME AT
GRETCHEN'S KNOTTED
BODY. LIKE A DULL-
EYED SCULPTOR
STARING AT A PIECE
OF NAKED MARBLE.
HE RUMINATES.

OKAY.

DROOL AND
MUCUS FLOW IN
STEADY RIVERS,
HIS MASSIVE
FRAME PERPE-
TUALLY FILLED
WITH MORE
FLUID WASTE
THAN IT CAN
CONTAIN.



NO TRACES.
LIKE
ALWAYS.

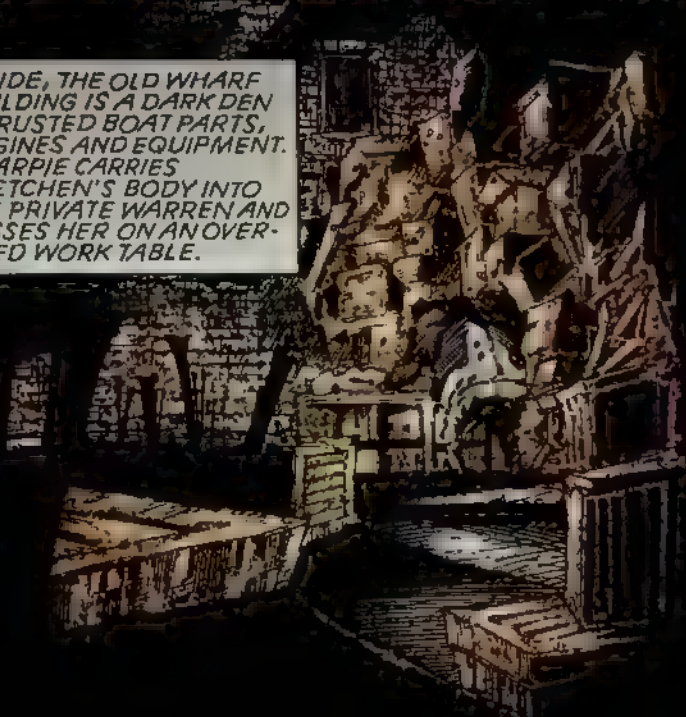
OSBORNE WATCHES
THE RETARDED
BEHEMOTH LIFT
AND CARRY AWAY
THE WOMAN'S
RUINED BODY.
HE FEELS FRESH BILE
RISE IN HIS THROAT.



WHAT'S HE
GONNA DO WITH
THE BODY?

TRUST
ME -- YOU
DON'T
WANNA
KNOW.

INSIDE, THE OLD WHARF
BUILDING IS A DARK DEN
OF RUSTED BOAT PARTS,
ENGINES AND EQUIPMENT.
SHARPIE CARRIES
GRETCHEN'S BODY INTO
HIS PRIVATE WARREN AND
TOSSES HER ON AN OVER-
USED WORK TABLE.



A RATTLE
BREATH

A GASP

THEN A
PAIN-
FILLED
COUGH.

GRETCHEN STARES UP
THROUGH BLURRED
EYES INTO THE FACE OF
HORROR MADE FLESH.

SHARPIE'S DULL EYES
BRIGHTEN SLIGHTLY.
WHAT PASSES FOR JOY
CREASES HIS SNOT-AND-
SALIVA ENCRUSTED LIPS

ALIVE?
huh huh...
EVEN
BETTER.

GRETCHEN'S SCREAM IS LOST
BENEATH THE BUZZ OF THE
SURGICAL SAW. SHE STARES
AT A CEILING NEATLY LINED
WITH DECAPITATED HEADS.
WOMENS' SKULLS. SMALL.
DELICATE. SOME STILL
BEARING FLESH, SCALP, AND
HAIR. ALL SURROUNDED BY
BOUQUETS OF LONG-STEM
ROSES IN FULL BLOOM.

A SHATTERING
SCREAM RISES
ABOVE A CITY
OF SCREAMS

A SOUL IS IN
TRANSITION.

BEING
MURDERED
AND REBORN
OUT OF A
WOMB OF
ANGUISH.

BEAUTIFUL
HORROR.

A SOUL THAT
KNOWS THAT
THEY WHO
BORE IT
SHALL REAP
IN GREAT
AGONY WHAT
THEY HAVE SO
CARELESSLY
SOWN.

IMAGE INFO

blah, blah, blah 51

Hi ya. So what's been happening since last month? Todd and I met with Scott Sassa, the new CEO over at Marvel Comics. (See, we still get along!) Scott will really help out our industry in the long run being from the normal business environment, not from our individual and caustrophobic little world. Over drinks in Manhattan we discussed Marvel's past, present, and future, as we did TMP's. We look forward to surviving this "depression" together. Welcome.

From there we were off to Detroit for the weekend. It was Spawn night at the Detroit Whalers hockey game. They played and inevitably lost to the greatest junior hockey team today, the Ottawa 67's. Todd signed a ton of comics and action figures before the game. Thanks to all who attended, especially my two new buddies from Cincinnati and the person you see below.

The young woman in the photo next to me is Lauren Podel. Lauren's father works for WRIF 101 radio in Detroit. (The only decent rock station in all of Detroit, according to Beth Sullivan who works at McFarlane Toys!) He was nice enough to cover the event for us. Thanks again. Did I mention that they are both huge Spawn fans, as is evident by Lauren's choice of appare that day.

The other photo features the incomparable A. Simmons and two of his buds. On the left, for you non Star Trek NG people, is LeVar Burton and on the right is Robert Townsend aka "Meteor Man". The photo was taken at the Puzzle Zoo.

Haloween benefit a couple of months ago. A makes a lot of appearances throughout the year at benefits and the like. If you would like him to appear at a convention or benefit you are planning, please feel free to write him at the address listed on the letters page or End Cap.

Meanwhile back in Detroit. All of the toy company met for two days to discuss the second half of

1997 and first half of 1998. Plan to see a couple of toy lines based on the movie, as well as Total Chaos 2 and an entirely new Monsters line, which is too cool to discuss here. See future End Caps for more details.

We also discussed what our showroom will look like for Toy Fair this year (Feb. 10-17). I can't announce our other toy line yet, (a very well known rock band) but they are willing to lend us some of their memorabilia for the show. Promise to show you some pics. We will also be showing some movie footage and well as the official trailer for the film.



Speaking of the film. On January 29th Todd and I are flying into L.A. to meet with the producer and the director. What's on the agenda you ask? Well, we get to see the first full cut of the film. Now don't get too excited. Only about ten percent of the special effects will be complete, so in their place will be pencil sketches of the scene. But, we will leave the screening room with a sense of what the final flick that you all will see shall look like. Yes, we are excited. Look for a report of the findings in Spawn 58 or 59.

For those of you lucky enough to attend any convention where we will have a presence next year, we will be running a ten minute preview of the film, as well as the official teaser trailer. Want to have the scoop on the flick before your buddies come check it out. Besides Todd and/or Al will sign your books and tell you stories about the good ole days when we were selling over a million copies a month (1994).

Until next month, hope you had a great Christmas and New Year. I would like to say thanks to everyone we here at TMP had the pleasure of doing business with. Thanks and have a wonderful 1997.

Terry Fitzgerald



Step One: Writing



First, let me welcome you back to the column discussing the upcoming HBO *Spawn* animated series. The inclusion of this column has been missing for the past few issues due to lack of space.

Before I begin, let me bring you up to date on where the series sits as we speak. Episodes 1 through 3 have been delivered, and we have made slight changes to them before going into the final step of adding sound effects and music. Episode 2 is complete, and Todd made a trip to the just last week to see the episode in HBO's official screening room. "It's definitely impressive with the lights off and the sound blaring," stated Todd. All 6 episodes will be completed before they are given an approximate air date of May 1997.

Now, let's go back to the beginning. When HBO decided to license *Spawn* for its first animated series, one of the first steps was to secure a writer. "I know my schedule wouldn't allow me to write the episodes," expressed Todd, "but I wanted someone on the project who understood *Spawn* and his plight back on Earth." At this point, Alan McElroy had completed, with Mark Dippe the script for *Spawn: The Movie*. "I was very impressed by how much Alan understood *Spawn*," stated Todd. "At that point I only had about 12 issues of *Spawn* completed, but Alan dove right into the story and unlike many other writers we looked at, Alan understood *Spawn*." HBO looked at several writers before Todd suggested they contact Alan. Unfortunately, at that time, Alan was committed to another project and could only do the first few episodes. Todd and HBO attempted to secure another writer for the balance of the 6 episodes, but were unsuccessful in their search. Episode 4

was critical to the 6 episode story arc and had to be written in such a way as to connect the introductory episodes as well as lead into the climactic ending in episode 6. With the help of a guest writer and a lot of Todd's input, script 4 was completed, and Alan McElroy came back to complete the story arc.

Before the writer can begin the scripts an overall plot of how the 6 shows should develop was presented to Todd and HBO. The library of *Spawn* issues had since grown, and thus it became the focus of debate on which characters to develop in these first 6 shows. Many different avenues were discussed at this time. Should we concentrate on Angela or Jason Wynn or the Clown? "I'd rather see a

few key characters developed than having every character who has appeared in the comic make it to the animated screen," voiced McFarlane. "Besides, many viewers of the series will have never picked up a comic before so I don't want to bombard them with too much information, too soon," he added.

Without giving too much away, the first 6 shows not only introduce *Spawn* and many of the supporting characters, but focus on the character that first appeared in

Spawn #5.

After much discussion, the plot then goes through a few revisions and once it has been approved by all parties, the writer can sit down and draft the first script. When writing a script for both the big and small screens, live-action or animation, the rule of thumb is one page of script equals one minute of on screen action. As scenes with dialogue tend to move faster than ones of primarily action, the more dialogue a script contains the longer it can be.

When the writer completes his first

draft, he presents it to the Producer Catherine Winder, Supervising Director Eric Radomski, the Executive Producer Todd McFarlane, the co-producers Terry Fitzgerald and Karen Horne, and other heads at HBO. At this point a conference call is arranged between all parties. As everyone involved represents a different angle of the show's production, the conversation goes beyond if they like how the script reads or not.

Catherine wears several different hats being the show's producer. "I've been responsible for overseeing all elements of the show creatively and operationally. I work on two levels: I work for HBO in terms of ensuring they get a show within the budget, schedule parameters, and the creative quality they're expecting, and I work closely with the director and creator, Todd, to ensure that they are getting what they want. In short, I work both sides and push things as far as I can to get the best product and make everyone happy."

Eric Radomski, the Supervising Director, looks at the script from another angle. He constantly has to ask the question, can this be done in animation? If the script is either too action or dialog heavy how is this going to appear on the screen? The last thing you want is scene after scene with the same characters talking. Obviously, the more characters, scenes and locations that appear in an episode, the longer it takes to complete. Scene locations, control drawings, and color selections need to be developed and the more heavier they are in the script demands not only more artists, but more time to complete, and ultimately more time to get approved.

Todd looks at the script from another totally different angle. "I knew that some liberties needed to be taken in telling a story in a comic book was extremely different from that in an animated series." (Acknowledging this hurdle, Todd made numerous changes to each script lightening the story so as not to offend the true *Spawn* comic book fan by straying too far from the *Spawn* story line. "The first episode has to catch the attention of the audience because without that they won't tune in the following week to see what happens," expresses McFarlane. "It doesn't matter how exciting the next episodes are if nobody is there to watch them. The first script needs to convey certain aspects of *Spawn* while at the same time making the audience want to come back for more. Hopefully, episode one will do this."



The writing process of an animated series is more time consuming than most people would realize for without a good script it doesn't matter who reads the words or how great the animation is. From the time a plot is submitted for each episode up until when the script is complete takes at least a month and sometimes can take as much as three months. Fortunately, the animation process has a domino effect. Once the first script is complete, the animators begin designing the control drawings for the scenes and characters so the first episode is long under way when episode 6 is finally

completed.

The next column will discuss the process of selecting talent to record the voices, recording the voices and editing same.

I hope you find this column interesting and informative. If you have any questions that you would like answered in this column, please write to:

Spawn the animated series
PO Box 27228
Tempe, AZ
85280-7228





FOR NICK
1996

END CAP

In last month's issue, we began answering your questions regarding variations by giving you the first of three installments to our listing of figures created by McFarlane Toys from 1994 to 1996. We continue with our list here...

SERIES THREE - FALL OF 1995

Cosmic Angela

No repaints were released of this figure...

Known Variants: The back of her head (below the helmet) was supposed to be painted silver (to match the helmet). On some, it is flesh-colored.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

The Curse

No repaints were released of this figure...

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Ninja Spawn

No repaints were released of this figure...

Known Variants: Packaging variant: the sticker that originally covered his face on the left side was moved to the open spot on the right corner.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Releemer

No repaints were released of this figure...

Known Variants: Some versions had a mostly-clear energy hand, while others had a lot more gold-paint covering the bulb.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Spawn II

No repaints were released of this figure...

Known Variants: None. All came with the half-mask.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Violator

While this guy was pictured with cybernetic attachments on the back, he did NOT come with them until later. So the first version was all denim, and the cybernetic attachments are on the repaint.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Vertebreaker

No repaints were released of this figure...

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: Grey and green body with white spikes from Hills, PayLess Drugstore, Puzzle Zoo, Shepherd, H.E.B. Grocery, Shopko, and Venture in Fall, 1996.

WETWORKS SERIES ONE - FALL OF 1995

Dane

No repaints were made of this figure...

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Dozer

No repaints were made of this figure...

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Grati

No repaints were made of this figure...

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Werewolf

Originally in brown fur, later packed with WetWorks II repaints in a light-blue furred version.

Known Variants: His nose was not always painted correctly (it should be black).

Exclusive Versions?: Puzzle Zoo sold a "grey" Werewolf (with red or grey tail) in Summer 1996. The light-blue version had a matching club, while the grey version had a brown club.

Vampire

Originally grey with a red loincloth, later packed with WetWorks II repaints in a short-haired green version with black loincloth.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Mother-One

No repaints were made of this figure...

Known Variants: Originally shipped with a "fat face", which was quickly replaced with a "high-cheekbone" version.

Exclusive Versions?: Shipped with Shaft (from Youngblood) in a special box exclusively through K-Mart in November of 1995. That version was identical to the previous one.



SPAWN SERIES THREE

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SPAWN SERIES THREE



YOUNGBLOOD SERIES ONE - FALL OF 1995

No repaints were made of this series.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: White stripe on bottom of shirt was later taken off.

Dutch

No repaints were made of this series.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Crypte

No repaints were made of this series.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Die Hard

No repaints were made of this series.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Shaft

No repaints were made of this series.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: Shipped with Mother-One (from WetWorks) in a special box exclusively through K-Mart in November of 1995. That version was identical to the previous one.

Sentinel

No repaints were made of this series.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

SERIES FOUR - JANUARY OF 1996

Ske-Spawn

First version had a red face-mask and tan or gray missile launcher (see variants, repaint had black mask and a black launcher).

Known Variants: While most original versions had brown/tan missile launcher and missile, some had a black/gray launcher and projectile.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Clown II

The original shipped with the aforementioned dead-head, and black guns on the shoulders. The repaint had no head (only teeth marks), and orange day-glo guns.

Known Variants: Some of the FIRST paint series shipped with no dead on the arm (using the mold from the repaint). Also, some had banglebeers (ammo-belts) across the chest did not have the gold speckles that others had.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Exo-Skeleton Spawn

The original had a black body (normal costume) with black/grey exoskeleton (except for a minor variation, see variants). The repaints had a WHITE costume and white/light grey bones.

Known Variants: Some of the FIRST paint series shipped with brown/tan bones instead of black/grey. Also, while approximately 50% of the black/grey exoskeletons shipped with the half-mask, the remainder shipped with an equal number of FULL masks or NO masks (hamburger-head). Likewise, the repaint shipped equally with full masks and no masks.

Exclusive Versions?: Green and red version through Target, late Fall 1996.

Shadowhawk

The first version was black with silver trim, while the repaint was gold with grey trim.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Cy-Gor

The first version was silver with purple trim, while the repaint was silver with gold trim.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: White version from Target, in Fall of 1996.

The Maxx

There were no repaints of this figure...

Known Variants: The first wave of figures shipped with one black 12. The second wave shipped with one white 12.

Approximately the same number of each was made.

Exclusive Versions?: Maxx with FOUR 12s (two white, two black) through FAO Schwartz in Fall, 1996.

WETWORKS SERIES TWO - SPRING OF 1996

Mendoza

In the initial paint version, he was flesh-colored with a tattoo, while the repaint was half-gold/half-flesh.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Delta Commander

First paint job was all gold, the repaint was in flesh tones.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Blood Queen

First series figures wore an all-black outfit, while the repaint had red trim.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Assassin Oni

The first paint-set of this character was done in blue plastic, while the repaint was a eerie sort of red plastic.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Frankenstein

Initial paint versions of him were brownish, while the repaints were more green in the "flesh" areas.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.

Algrim

In the initial paint job her "flesh" was gold (covered by a symbiote), while the repaint was in flesh tones.

Known Variants: None.

Exclusive Versions?: None.



THE RAGE OF CY-GOR

The cybematic simian,
CY-GOR,
rampages
through the back
alleys of New
York City seek-
ing revenge on
his mortal
enemy
Spawn!

SPAWN #57

By
Todd McFarlane
and
Greg Capullo

It's still
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CURSE OF THE SPAWN

#6

BY
ALAN MCELROY,
DWAYNE TURNER
AND
DANNY MIKI

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good thing she met Gen 13!



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